
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. A VISION FOR ARLINGTON

This community plan establishes a “vision” for the community of Arlington and provides a framework and implementation program to realize that vision. The following is the Arlington Community Plan vision:

It is the vision of this community plan to restore, strengthen, and maintain Arlington’s unique character as a community of primarily single family homes centered around a dense, pedestrian oriented commercial, institutional and cultural center reflective of the Community’s heritage.

2. AREAS ADDRESSED IN THE PLAN

Through its vision, this community plan establishes the basis for change in Arlington. The plan does not address every area of Arlington but, rather, concentrates on specific areas of the community that are vital to Arlington’s potential for a successful future. Areas not addressed in this plan are covered in the City’s General Plan. The following summarizes the areas addressed in this plan, the issues identified, and the approaches recommended.

- **Magnolia/Van Buren Corridors:** The heart of the Magnolia/Van Buren Corridors is the original “Arlington Village,” a traditional downtown that gives Arlington its character and identity. Radiating out from the Village are four “portal” areas, West Magnolia, East Magnolia, North Van Buren, and South Van Buren. The concerns in these areas relate to restoring and maintaining Arlington’s sense of place, while aggressively pursuing its economic revitalization. This study addresses these concerns by establishing design guidelines for private properties and streetscapes to help assure development and redevelopment conform to the basic character that makes Arlington unique.
- **Economic Revitalization:** The plan includes an economic revitalization chapter to organize the restoration of Arlington as a vital commercial area. This chapter concludes Arlington has the potential to be a vital commercial area, based primarily upon a combination of goods and services that are unique, and therefore draw from a large area (antiques, restaurants, specialty music, etc.) and those that are aimed at the daily needs of residents and area workers (pharmaceuticals, personal services, groceries, etc.). To realize its potential, Arlington’s business community needs to organize itself and work cooperatively with government.
- **Indiana Avenue Corridor:** The Indiana Avenue Corridor is made up of the properties on the north side of Indiana Avenue between Harrison Street and Van Buren Boulevard, and on the north and south sides of the street from Van Buren Boulevard to Gibson Street. The concerns in this area relate to the feasibility of these residential size properties to successfully

transition to office/industrial uses. The plan creates unique development standards that allow smaller lots, shallower setbacks, and reduced right-of-way.

- **Large Residential Lots:** South of Magnolia Avenue, east and west of Van Buren Boulevard, are areas of extraordinarily deep, relatively narrow lots. This study examines these areas to determine if there are feasible ways to add new infill housing. Consideration is given to infill subdivisions and flag lots. The plan recommends Arlington concentrate more upon property maintenance than upon efforts to resubdivide existing lots.
- **Implementation Action Plan:** Most of the chapters include recommendations that address the issues raised. The implementation action plan sets a framework for organizing the implementation of these recommendations. It has five parts as follows:
 - a. **Implement the Design Guidelines and Land Use Recommendations:** To realize the vision for Arlington, it is essential that the regulations and guidelines are in place to shape the improvements to come. A community's quality of life is preserved or lost *one property at a time*. Every time a building permit is issued in Arlington, the community either comes one step closer to realizing its dream or one step further away from that dream. The first step toward implementing the Arlington Community Plan is to apply consistently to all development and redevelopment proposals.
 - b. **Create a Business Improvement District:** Redevelopment alone will not rescue Arlington's ailing commercial district. Another important component is an organized business community with a vision. A BID would generate further funds for improvements throughout Arlington's business district. A BID can also be an important catalyst in focusing the energies of the business community toward implementing the recommendations of Kennedy Smith's economic study.
 - c. **Focus Redevelopment Funds on the Village of Arlington Area:** Now that Arlington's Redevelopment Area has been expanded, it is important that priorities be set for the use of the resulting funds. While there will be many competing uses for this money, the revitalization of the Village area needs to be strongly emphasized. The Village is the core of Arlington's heritage and image. Redevelopment successes here will have significant "multiplier effects" that will be high-profile and that will encourage spending of private dollars, both in the Village and elsewhere in Arlington.
 - d. **Form an Implementation Task Force:** It is not unusual for good plans to sit on the shelf after adoption. To avoid this in Arlington, the City Council should form an implementation task force of individuals fully supportive of the Arlington Community Plan and dedicated to its implementation. This would not necessarily be the same as the existing Arlington Community Committee but the existing Committee would, undoubtedly, be a source of members.

- e. **Implement Small Project Immediately:** To get the energy going in Arlington, the community should choose a relatively small, but visible project to show that it is *doing something*. Examples would include entry signing, the Magnolia/Van Buren intersection improvements, colorful banners, tree plantings, a facade paint-up-fix-up program, and the like.

The reader who does not have the time to read the whole study but wishes to gain a further understanding of its purposes and directions can best accomplish this by reading Chapters 4 through 7 and the conclusions and recommendations at the end of all chapters.